

Remarks

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject patent application are respectfully requested.

Claim 4 has been amended to correct an obvious typographical error.

Applicant's representative wishes to thank Examiner Lao for the courtesy extended during the interview of July 24, 2007. The remarks below reflect the substance of this interview.

Claims 1-13 and 23-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as allegedly being made "obvious" by Williams (U.S. Patent No. 5,896,459) in view of applicant's admitted prior art. While not acquiescing in this rejection, independent claims 1, 5 and 23 have been amended as discussed at the interview. Conforming amendments have been made to claims 3, 7 and 25. The discussion below makes reference to the amended claims.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a mixer that includes a mixer buffer for storing sample values for three or more sound channels including at least a left sound channel, a right sound channel and a surround sound channel, each sound channel including a main sound component and one or more corresponding auxiliary sound components. Send paths sends the auxiliary sound components for each sound channel to a sound effects processor, and return paths from the sound effects processor separately add the effects-processed auxiliary sound components for each of the three or more channels to the respective corresponding main sound component. Independent claims 5 and 23 each contains similar recitations. By way of example without limitation, these features find support in Figure 9B and the accompanying description relating to the left, right and surround channels, each of which includes a main component and AuxA and AuxB components.

As discussed at the interview, the proposed combination of Williams and the admitted prior art fails to disclose or suggest a mixer including a mixer buffer for storing sample values for a left sound channel, a right sound channel and a surround channel; sending paths; and return paths as claimed.

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In particular, audio mixer 100 of Williams provides a “dry” mix output 104, an effects return mix output 106, and a main mix output 108. The dry mix output 104 represents the sum or mix of individual input audio signals. The effects returns output 106 provides select or various combinations of select audio signals that have been processed by a special effects processor. The main mix output 108 provides a main audio mix representing the mix of the dry audio mix and the effects returns audio mix. None of these outputs 104, 106 and 108 results from separately adding effects-processed auxiliary sound components for left, right and surround sound channel to respective corresponding main sound components as claimed and the admitted prior art provides no teaching or suggestion to do so.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the proposed combination of Williams and the admitted prior art would not have made obvious claims 1-13 and 23-29.

Claims 14-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as allegedly being made “obvious” by Kaneoka (U.S. Patent No. 4,783,812) in view of Williams and the admitted prior art. Claim 14 has been amended as discussed at the interview. Conforming amendments have been made to claim 16. Kaneoka is applied for its disclosure of a gaming system, but is admitted to lack a sound effects processor and a mixer as specified in claim 14. Williams and the admitted prior art are alleged to remedy this deficiency. The claim 14 mixer is similar to that described in claim 1, for example. As explained above, Williams and the admitted prior art do not disclose or suggest such a mixer and thus the proposed combination of Kaneoka, Williams and the admitted prior art would not have resulted in the subject matter of claims 14-22.

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Applicant submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and action to that end is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Michael J. Shea", written over a horizontal line.

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